

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 PM-03 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15 RSC-01 CIAE-00

DODE-00 INR-05 NSAE-00 PA-01 USIA-06 PRS-01 SAM-01

SAJ-01 IO-10 ACDA-05 /069 W

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R 151330Z NOV 74

FM AMCONSUL HAMBURG

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3220

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

USMISSION USBERLIN

AMCONSUL BREMEN

AMCONSUL DUSSELDORF

AMCONSUL FRANKFURT

AMCONSUL MUNICH

AMCONSUL STUTTGART

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E. O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, GW

SUBJ: APPROVAL OF HANS-ULRICH KLOSE AS MAYOR OF HAMBURG

REF: HAMBURG 1372

1. AN EXTRAORDINARY SPD CONVENTION IN HAMBURG ON NOVEMBER 8 APPROVED THE ELECTION OF FORMER SENATOR OF THE INTERIOR HANS-ULRICH KLOSE AS THE SUCCESSOR OF PETER SCHULZ AS FIRST MAYOR OF HAMBURG. KLOSE FORMALLY ASSUMED OFFICE ON NOVEMBER 12. HIS SUCCESSOR AS SENATOR OF THE INTERIOR, SPD BUNDESTAG DEPUTY WERNER STAAK, WAS SWORN IN ON NOVEMBER 13.

2. IN HIS FIRST SPEECH BEFORE THE HAMBURG STATE ASSEMBLY ON NOVEMBER 13, KLOSE CONCENTRATED ALMOST ENTIRELY ON THE FINANCIAL PROBLEMS OF THE CITY, WHICH, HE EMPHASIZED, WOULD NECESSITATE DRASTIC BUDGET CUTS AND THE CANCELLATION OF PROJECTS WHICH THE PREVIOUS ADMINISTRATION HAD APPROVED AND HAD APPROPRIATED FUNDS

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TO FINANCE. KLOSE IMPLIED THAT THE PRECARIOUS ECONOMIC SITUATION

WOULD REQUIRE COURAGEOUS AND WISE COMPROMISES ON THE PART OF THE SPD/FDP COALITION PARTNERS. HIS FORTHRIGHT ASSESSEMENT WAS RECEIVED RESPECTFULLY BY ALL POLITICAL FACTIONS IN THE STATE ASSEMBLY.

3. BECAUSE OF THE MILITANT RADICALISM OF SOME MEMBERS OF THE SPD AND THE FDP IN THE STATE ASSEMBLY, KLOSE MUST BE PREPARED TO SUFFER THEIR MAVERICK WAYS AS HIS PREDECESSOR HAD TO BEFORE HIM. HOWEVER, KLOSE IS A MODERATE AND PRAGMATIC CONCILIATOR. HIS PLEASANT AND FLEXIBLE PERSONALITY WILL GIVE HIM AN ADVANTAGE OVER HIS PREDECESSOR IN HIS DAY-TO-DAY DEALINGS WITH SOME OF THE MORE INDEPENDENT-MINDED MEMBERS OF HIS OWN COALITION GOVERNMENT AND THE CDU OPPOSITION.

4. PROFESSOR HERBERT WEICHMANN, FORMER SPD MAYOR OF HAMBURG, AND, UNQUESTIONABLY THIS CITY-STATE'S MOST RESPECTED ELDER STATESMAN, HAS INFORMED ME THAT KLOSE HAS ALREADY SOUGHT HIS GUIDANCE AND SUPPORT IN MUSTERING THE BACKING AND GOOD WILL OF THE MORE INFLUENTIAL LEADERS OF THE THREE POLITICAL FACTIONS IN THE STATE ASSEMBLY AND THE HAMBURG BUSINESS COMMUNITY. WEICHMANN HAS PROMISED TO HELP KLOSE WHO, AT 37 YEARS OF AGE, IS WELL AWARE THAT HE CANNOT, WITH MUCH CONVICTION, PLAY THE ROLE OF FATHER-FIGURE THE GENERALLY CONSERVATIVE HAMBURG ELECTORATE EXPECTS OF ITS MAYOR. KLOSE, HOWEVER, IS INTELLIGENT AND PRUDENT ENOUGH TO MOVE CAUTIOUSLY AND DIPLOMATICALLY IN HIS DEALINGS WITH THE POLITICAL PROS IN THIS CITY SO AS TO BROADEN THE BASE OF HIS SUPPORT IN EACH DIRECTION ON THE POLITICAL SPECTRUM. WE BELIEVE HE HAS MADE AN AUSPICIOUS START AS THE YOUNGEST MAYOR IN THE HISTORY OF HAMBURG AND WILL SURVIVE BY AVOIDING THE ACERBIC AND ARROGANT WAYS OF HIS UNPOPULAR PREDECESSOR HERE.BROGAN

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: MAYOR, ELECTION CANDIDATES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 15 NOV 1974
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: cunninfx
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974HAMBUR01472
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D740330-0622
From: HAMBURG
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t19741141/aaaabiay.tel
Line Count: 92
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: HAMBURG 1372
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: cunninfx
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 14 MAY 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <14 MAY 2002 by boyleja>; APPROVED <18 MAR 2003 by cunninfx>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: APPROVAL OF HANS-ULRICH KLOSE AS MAYOR OF HAMBURG
TAGS: PINT, GE, HAMBURG, (KLOUSE, HANS-ULRICH), (SCHULZ, PETER)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005